FOREVER KNIGHT

Episode # 315

"The Games Vampires Play"

written by

Naomi Janzen

SHOOTING DRAFT - November 23, 1995
PINK - November 27, 1995 - FULL SCRIPT
BLUE - November 28, 1995 - PAGES:
1,2,10,20,23,24,31,31A,34,35,36,50,51
GREEN - November 29, 1995 - PAGES:
13,13A,22,24,26,26A,31,33,34,38,42,42A,43,43A,50

" Games Vampires Play "

TEASER

FADE IN:

Menacing, out of control thrash/speed/metal MUSIC -

1 INT. - ANYWHERE - NIGHT - VIRTUAL REALITY 1

Unreal, hyper real...skewed angles, false colors. Weirdly lit.

POV MOVING: this way and that. *

*
*

P.O.V. SWISHES AROUND

Behind us, a figure. Beautiful, young, funky. Like she came right off a Paris fashion runway. A hint of fang gleams in the weird light. Call her VIRTUAL VAMPIRE, for now.

2 INT. VIRTUAL DIMENSIONS - COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT REALITY 2

CLOSE on a man's lips. He speaks into a tiny, headset mic suspended in front of his mouth.

MAN
(into mic)
Okay. There you are.

PULL BACK to a young Oriental man. Call him 'R.H.' LO. He wears virtual reality headgear: high-tech yet streamlined and compact. Black sunglasses mated to stereo headphones...

Adjust to see he's sitting alone in a sterile-looking office, bathed in the ghostly glow of several computer monitors. Surrounded by banks of computer equipment and electronics.

He raises a hand INTO FRAME - we see a web of ultra-thin wires like veins under latex gloves, studded with sensors. He reaches to explore the air in front of him.

We INTERCUT:

3 ANYWHERE - VIRTUAL REALITY 3

OUR POV: VIRTUAL VAMPIRE moves toward the Man's virtual fingers. She smiles, revealing FANGS. We will come to know her as RITA.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: 3

REVERSE - VIRTUAL REALITY

Our computer whiz: 'R.H.' LO. Sans headgear in VR mode. Like Dr. Frankenstein appraising his monster, he touches the Vampire's dress.

R.H.
(to himself)
Not bad. Feels almost real. But I think I better debug the code in the tactile response routines...
(to Virtual Vampire)
Don't you think?
(off the non-response)
I thought you'd agree...

4 COMPUTER LAB - REALITY 4

R.H.'s gloved fingers dance over a keyboard. On the monitors above, machine code scrolls onscreen.

R.H.
That should work a little better.

5 ANYWHERE - VIRTUAL REALITY 5

The Virtual Vamp leers into camera.

VIRTUAL VAMPIRE
Did you come to work or... would you care to play?

R.H.
Sure. I've got an hour to kill...

6 COMPUTER LAB - REALITY 6

R.H. reclines in his chair. He smiles, relaxing. Ready for the ride. A beat and the snout of silenced gun pushes into the frame, presses ever so gently against R.H.'s cheek.

7 ANYWHERE - VIRTUAL REALITY 7

Virtual Vamp has one long steel fingernail juxtaposed against R.H.'s cheek in exactly the same position as the REALITY gun. The vampire smiles. Light begins to pulse around her.

VIRTUAL VAMPIRE
But it only takes a second to die. *

The Vampire draws her steel fingernail down along the side of R.H.'s face as...

8 COMPUTER LAB - REALITY 8

R.H. stiffens slightly. Reacts to what he thinks is VR stimulus... as gun is drawn lightly along side of his face.

R.H.
Whoa - that feels real... Damn, I'm good.

9 ANYWHERE VIRTUAL REALITY 9*

The Virtual Vamp's steely fingernail moves, rippling over R.H.'s skin...down to his throat.

VIRTUAL VAMPIRE
I want you to experience the greatest sensation of all. Something you've never felt before and you'll never feel again... *
(beat)
Death.

With that, Virtual Vamp thrusts a switchblade fingernail into R.H.'s neck. We HEAR the muffled POP of a silenced gunshot O.C. R.H. gasps. Reacts in shock...

10 COMPUTER LAB - REALITY 10

ON R.H.'s chair...empty now, swiveling slowly...

TILT DOWN...VR headgear on the floor. R.H. sprawled...a look of dead shock on his face. A pool of blood around his head.

Off this image:

FADE OUT

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

11 EXT. - STREET - NIGHT 11*

The Caddie moves down city streets. *

12 INT. CADDY - NIGHT 12*

Nick staring ahead, lost in thought for the moment. * Distracted....bored? Tracy sits beside him, something on her * mind. After a few moments, she begins her rant, which she's * trying to soften with a little humour. *

TRACY *
Okay, here's the problem: the last * couple of weeks I have been swamped in * paperwork... our paper work. Our * arrest reports, our weapons * discharge reports, our long distance * logs, our case summaries, our * requisitions, our grief sheets... * the works. I've got our paperwork * piled up to here. *
(a hand over her head) *
Our paperwork? As in me AND you. * So my question to you Nicholas B. * Knight, is: why am I the one doing * all the paper work? I mean * partners work together, right? That * means we're both supposed to do * paperwork, right? As in me and you? *
(beat) *
There, I said it... I feel much * better. *

She looks over to him. Nick hasn't even heard her. *

TRACY *
Nick? *

Nick turns to her slowly. It dawns on her he is not kidding. *

NICK *
Yeah? *

TRACY *
Did you hear a word I said? *

NICK *
You said you were feeling better. *
That's good... *
(MORE) *

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: 12

NICK (cont'd)
(off her withering look)
Isn't it?

TRACY
(studying him)
What's wrong with you lately? You seem right out of it.

NICK
(out of it again)
Out of what?

She shakes her head in frustration and we

DISSOLVE TO:

13 OMITTED 13*

14 EXT.- VIRTUAL DIMENSIONS, INC. - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING) 14

Track in past squad cars with flashing lights...PAST a uniform cop who strings yellow tape across the entrance of the building and we

DISSOLVE INTO:

15 INT. - COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS) 15

Crime scene amid the mainframes and monitors; forensics mop-up in progress even as the cyber stuff thrums on...

A photographer flashes pictures of R.H.'s prone body then moves off. Natalie moves INTO SHOT as Reese joins her.

NATALIE
Single gunshot. Close range. Killed him instantly.

REESE
Execution-style. No sign of struggle or forcible entry... the killer knew the victim or the victim trusted the killer...

Nick comes in...has R.H.'s VR HEADGEAR in an evidence bag. He holds it up for Reese and Natalie.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: 15

NICK
Or the victim was preoccupied.
(off Reese's puzzled look to the the VR gear)
Virtual Reality gear. If he was in here, he was oblivious to anything else.

REESE
(shakes his head)
Brain candy. Got a nephew who mainlines this stuff. My sister says he'd rather play the damn games than spend the afternoon on the hockey rink. *

Here comes Tracy...

TRACY
Victim's name is R.H. Lo. He's a progammer here... software developer and co-owner of the company. We're trying to find the other owner. *

ON Nick. Looks away, disinterested. Reese takes note.

REESE
You with us here, detective? Hope we're not boring you...

NICK
...Yeah. Sure.

REESE *
Okay, here's the drill: I'll talk to Massey in Computer Ops and get one of his people in on this case. Vetter, I'll want you on that... and Knight, I want you to follow up on ballistics. *

Nick nods half-heartedly.. ON Natalie. A puzzled look to Nick, and go to: *

16 OMITTED 16*

17 INT. - MORGUE - NIGHT 17

CLOSE ON a stainless-steel dish. A beat and a bloody slug plinks into the bottom, settles.

NICK
Don't you ever get tired of it?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 17

As she moves to a spleeny thing nearby by.

NATALIE
Of what?

NICK
The repetition. The routine.

Nat looks at him askance.

NATALIE
So that's what this is all about.
(off his silence)
Unlike yourself, some of us are on a clock. Life is short and busy. There's not enough time to do as much as we'd like so we're compelled to make the most of it.

She stops what she's doing... realizing - and it's not good.

NATALIE (cont'd)
You're not getting bored... are you?

NICK
I don't know.

NATALIE
Not good. Bored cops get careless. Which may not be a concern for you but it could be disastrous for your partner.

NICK
I can't help what I'm feeling. Which is...
(searches)
I'm having trouble staying interested in the work.

NATALIE
(beat)
I hate to say this, but boredom on the job is a very common, human dilemna. If you were anybody else, I'd prescribe a week on a beach somewhere. Write it off to "burn out". But you aren't anybody else.
(beat)
And in the past when this happened you...

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: 2 17

NICK
(realizing)
Moved on.

NATALIE
(confirming)
You move on... and there it is.

She unhappily peels off gloves and discards them.

NICK
I'm not saying that's what I'm going to do - but...

NATALIE
Look, Nick. I understand that being a vampire gives your life a little extra "kick". And that losing some of that has a down side. But it's what you <u>want</u>.
(off his silence)
If there's something missing in your life - in this life - try to do what the rest of us do. Find something <u>else</u> to fill the void. Or live with it.

On Nick's look... uncertainty. And go to:

18 INT. - REESE'S OFFICE - NIGHT 18

Reese is closing the door. He wants a one-on-one with Nick.

REESE
I'll cut straight to chase here Nick, I'm worried about you. You're off your game.

NICK
Yeah, I know. Problem is I'm not sure what to do about it.

REESE
Maybe you need some time off. A change of pace.

NICK
No... I don't think so.

REESE
Well you need something Nick. I never thought I'd here myself say this but I don't like what I'm seeing from you
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 18

REESE (cont'd) *
lately. I think you need to take *
stock of this situation and work it *
out before Vetter starts thinking *
she better be watching her back when *
she's out there with you. *

NICK *
(this hits him)
Captain, my partners can rely on me.

REESE
Cops are human, Knight. Sometimes they lose their focus and they don't realize it until it's too late. You're lucky. You see the signs. You just have to decide what you're gonna do about them.

Beat. Nick nods and exits. Reese watches him go... his concern unabated. *

19 INT. - PRECINCT BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS 19

Nick heads to his desk, freezes as he HEARS O.S.

FULFORD (O.S.)
It's a vampire.

Nick turns slowly and we rack focus to:

LINDA FULFORD, a young female detective and the precinct's resident cybernerd, wearing a VR HEADGEAR unit impounded as evidence from the crime scene. Engrossed in it...as Tracy stands by.

FULFORD
Look at this... *

And WHOMP! We're into:

INTERCUT:

20 N.D. LOCATION (A SMALL ROOM?) - VIRTUAL REALITY 20

FULFORD'S VR POV: The Virtual Vampire leering at Fulford. The virtual background assembling behing the VV. *

VIRTUAL VAMPIRE
Did you come to work... or would you like to play? *

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 20

FULFORD (o.s.)
That's what it is, she's a vampire. This is great stuff. Best I've seen.

And WHOMP! We're back in:

21 PRECINCT BULLPEN - REALITY 21

Fulford removes the VR headgear and she's face to face with NICK. Who's looking at her curiously.

FULFORD
Wanna try it?

Fulford passes the unit to Nick. *

TRACY
Nick, this is Detective Linda Fulford from Computer Ops. She'll be working with us on this.

NICK
(his hand extended)
Glad to have you with us, Detective.

FULFORD
(shakes his hand),
Thanks, this looks like it's going to be fun.
(re: VR headgear, gloves)
It's a prototype. Combination virtual reality game and online service. The hardware's up-linked by a digital cellphone to a high-speed mainframe at Virtual Dimensions lab. Next generation stuff. Check it out...

Nick takes the proferred glasses from Fulford.

TRACY
Frankly, I prefer real life to a computer game.

FULFORD
Except real life doesn't have any vampires.

Tracy holds her reaction in check. Nick notes this with a slight grin as he puts on the glasses.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

FULFORD (cont'd)
Hold on, Nick.

WHOMP! We're suddenly with Nick on a

22 N.D. LOCATION - VIRTUAL REALITY 22

NICK'S POV - The Virtual Vampire leering at Nick... she's very close.

VIRTUAL VAMPIRE
Did you come to work... or would you like to play? *

And she leans, brings her hand up to touch his face, her lips oh-so-close TO CAMERA... very steamy.

MATCH CUT TO:

23 PRECINCT - RESUME SCENE - REALITY 23

ON Nick...he's wearing the game set... he's reacting to the Virtual Vampire's touch...

CAMERA ADJUSTS to find Tracy and Fulford alongside. Tracy reacts, seeing Nick's unintentional response.

TRACY
What's happening in there?

NICK
I think I'm being seduced.

FULFORD
Yeah, well, these things are designed to seduce you.

TRACY
Into opening your wallet.

FULFORD
It's an interactive vampire game...

24 N.D. LOCATION AS BEFORE - VIRTUAL REALITY 24

NICK'S POV... The alluring VIRTUAL VAMPIRE parts her lips, revealing her fangs... She moves to Nick, puts a hand out to caress his neck. He cocks his head to one side to allow her to do it. * * * * *

25 INT. BULLPEN - REALITY 25

Tracy and Fulford look on, slightly amused. Nick's head is cocked in the same position as it was in VR.

TRACY
Nick...?

Suddenly aware of his "position"... Nick removes the game set.

FULFORD
Pretty girl, huh? *

NICK
Uh... very.

Nick absently touches his neck...

NICK
That's unbelievable... I could actually feel her touch...

Nick looks past her shoulder and his mouth drops. *

They turn to SEE a WOMAN, call her RITA. She's being escorted into interrogation by a female cop. She turns and happens to look at Nick... it's the woman he just saw in VR. She's the virtual vampire. * * * * *

OFF Nick... recognition. Intense curiosity. And we:

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

25A INT. PRECINCT BULLPEN - NIGHT 25A

Nick and Reese, followed by Tracy and Fulford, head toward Interrogation. *

REESE
Her name's Rita Scott. She's R.H. Lo's partner.

NICK
And obviously the model for the Virtual Vampire.

REESE
Who?

NICK
The vampire in the game.

Reese ponders this a moment before heading to his office as Nick, Tracy and Fulford move on toward interrogation. * *

26 INT. - INTERROGATION - NIGHT 26

Nick joins Tracy and Fulford. Rita is stunning, sexy and has a tendency to zero in on Nick throughout.

TRACY
You and R.H. Lo were the co owners of Virtual Dimensions?

RITA
(nods)
We met at York Univeristy, I was in the computer animation program while R.H. was designing software and hardware. We clicked.

TRACY
Clicked?

RITA
(a look to Nick)
In a business sense... only. We spent a few years in the video business then struck out on our own.
(proud)
We're pioneers. R.H. designed those remote headsets...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

RITA (cont'd)
they'll revolutionize the market. There's nothing like them anywhere else.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

NICK
I imagine they'll be worth a lot of money some day.

RITA *
I'm betting the ranch they will.
(beat)
This is like deja vu or something. I was just saying all this stuff four hours ago.
(off their looks)
On the Internet. I was online doing an interview with a computer rag.

NICK
(matter-of-fact)
Not much of an alibi.

RITA *
Didn't know I needed one.

FULFORD
Where were you logged on from?

RITA *
From my office. If you'd like, you can log onto the system for a transcript.

TRACY
We'll do that.

Nick notes the emnity that seems to have surfaced between Tracy and Rita. It's interesting, a bit amusing.

NICK
Did Lo have any enemies?

Rita looks directly at Nick. Not at Tracy. She holds his look for a long beat and:

RITA *
I can't think of any.

Close on Nick. He can't seem to look away from her.

27 INT. - PRECINCT - EVIDENCE ROOM - LATER 27

The room is dark. A beat. Door opens and the light comes on.

Nick enters. He's alone. He checks around to make sure no one sees him and

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: 27

ANGLE ON : the VR HEADSET and GEAR. Booked into evidence. Nick dons the gloves, punches numbers into his cellphone, slips on the headset, activates it, and WHOMP! We're in: *

28 INT. - N.D. LOCATION - NIGHT - VIRTUAL REALITY 28

Through smoke and neon lights. POV rushes up on "RITA", the VIRTUAL VAMP. Her back to the camera...she turns and flashes fangs at Nick.

She's like a tour guide here in Virtual Land. For this particular game, anyway.

RITA *
*
Did you come to work... or would you care to play?

ANGLE ON Nick. Here in VR MODE, he's not wearing the headset and gloves. *

NICK
...Show me how.

RITA (cont'd) *
Are you sure you're ready for what I have to offer?

NICK
I think I can handle it.

Virtual "sparks" are flying between them, as it were... Virtual Vamp Rita smiles. With a wave of her cape, she disappears in swirl of mist and Nick's suddenly in:

29 INT. - BOUDOIR - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 29

Your basic, Gothic candle-lit romance pit. With a surreal edge: the colors are off; not quite real.

(POST PROD. NOTE: Virtual time clock begins to count down from 30:00:00 from the moment Nick enters this location) Another GRAPHIC indicates blood level, which decreases as the clock ticks down and increases after he's fed.

A BEAUTIFUL VIRTUAL WOMAN, voluptuous to an almost impossible "fantasy" degree, strides toward Nick. Her low-cut gown flows in the virtual wind behind her.

She approaches Nick. Leans up and kisses him passionately. He returns the favour. She whispers to him.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

VIRTUAL BEAUTY
Take me.

She pulls Nick toward her. Nick shies away. He's confused. Doesn't seem to know what to do. Startles as he HEARS:

RITA (o.s.) *
In here, you may do as you please.

CAMERA ADJUSTS as Nick looks to:

RITA (cont'd) *
In here, you are a vampire! To win the game, you must kill. And keep killing. The victim's blood will be your source of power. *
(beat)
Go ahead. Sink your fangs into her flesh. Drink her essence... she will not resist.

ON Nick... holding the Virtual beauty at bay. She's foisting herself on him. Pressing herself against him. Fawning over him. ...So like, what's stopping him?

VIRTUAL BEAUTY
Take me, please. Take me.

RITA *
Why don't you do as she asks?

NICK
(confused)
I...can't.

RITA *
It's just a game. It's not real. No one gets hurt.
(beat)
Indulge yourself as you please.

Nick's still holding the Virtual Beauty at arm's length.

NICK
What's the point of the game?

RITA *
Pleasure. Fantasy fulfillment.
(beat)
Although I've made a few adjustments for this particular game.

NICK
Adjustments.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 2 29

RITA *
In case someone came looking.
(beat)
You are looking for something, aren't you, Detective? More than just escape, I mean.

On Nick... what the hell is she talking about? The Virtual Beauty continues to fawn over him... he finds her hard to resist as she twines her arms around him, kisses his face, etc... Nick tries to shake off the urge.

RITA (cont'd) *
You'll find what you're looking for if you make it all the way to end. *
But first you have to play the game.

Nick looks to RITA briefly, conflicted, his virtual urges interfering with his thinking...

NICK
I'm looking for Lo's killer.

RITA *
Well... that would be me. But tell me, detective: is there a court of law in reality where a "virtual confession" is admissable?
(beat; off Nick)
I didn't think so.

And she suddenly evaporates. Leaving Nick with the lusting Virtual Beauty. She pulls herself up to Nick...kisses him passionately. Nick's urges finally get the better of him. He knows he shouldn't... RITA's confession needs to be acted upon; but... He bares his fangs, and...sinks them into the Virtual Beauty's neck, drinks lustily until she drops. The BLOOD-O-METER creeps closer to full. He lets her slide * slowly to the floor.

Close On Nick. Boggled by the experience, By the visceral sensation of it... the verisimilitude of the Virtual Vampire Feeding to the real thing.

He reacts as he HEARS:

RITA (v.o.) *
Excellent, detective. Thrilling, wasn't she? Now then... it's time to move onward and upward.

Nick reacts to her choice of words... Suddenly SEES, ahead of him,

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 3 29

A DOORWAY looming. Brilliant light leaking out of it. The door opens... releasing a torrent of light. Nick looks around...

Ahead of him, the doorway beckons. He all but floats toward it through the surreal space... *

Nick moves into the doorway, and WHOMP! We're in:

30 OMITTED 30*

31 INT. - BCE PLACE - NIGHT - <u>STILL IN VIRTUAL REALITY</u> 31*

Nick walks slowly in. The cavernous space seeming to expand around him as he goes... Again, the colors are saturated... false. The angles are skewed.

ON NICK, check the place out, then turns, sees...

RITA... as alluring as ever. *

RITA *
You've passed the first level. Which, let's face it, was pretty easy. Now keep an eye on the display, your time left and your blood supply.
(beat; smiles)
I look forward to seeing you again.

She smiles at him seductively and then, she's gone.

CLOSE ON Nick. Scanning around at the surroundings. Recognizing them... they seem familiar.

NICK
(sotto)
BCE place. *

HIS POV: the place is empty. His thought is broken by...

REESE (O.S.)
...Knight? KNIGHT! What the hell are you doing?

And WE ZAP BACK TO:

32 INT. - PRECINCT EVIDENCE ROOM - NIGHT 32

Nick rips off the VR HEADSET and comes face to face with Reese, who can't quite believe what he's seeing, here. He's <u>angry</u>. *

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 32

Nick is feeling some of the after effects of the kill. He's slightly "off" for a brief period, during: *

REESE
Have you lost it, or something? *

NICK
Captain... I think the game is the key.

REESE
It's evidence. Put it away. *

NICK
I can't. Rita Scott killed Lo. *
She said so in the game.

Reese looks boggled.

REESE
In the game. That's great. So what am I gonna do? Bring her hologram up on charges in front of virtual court? I don't even have circumstantial evidence against her let alone a weapon. And I can't get a warrant to search her place without probable cause. Period. The end. *

Nick gathers up the VR headset, gloves and gear.

NICK
Where's Tracy?

REESE
She's with Fulford. They went back to the computer lab to see if Fulford can get into that mainframe thing, search the files, figure out what's what...
(beat)
Which is where you should be.

NICK
I've got to play the game out, Captain. I'm telling you: the answer's in the game.

REESE
What answer?

Nick has moved to the door. Off Reese's question, he stops, considers, then:

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: 2 32

NICK
Whatever it is, it's got to link Rita Scott directly to the crime. The murder weapon, maybe.

REESE
You're not thinking right, Nick. You're telling me she'll lead you right to a piece of evidence that'll put her away for life? Why in God's name would anyone do that?

NICK
(beat)
...Maybe that's the game she wants to play.

REESE
Enough about games. You got reasonable suspicion, we'll haul her back in here and get the truth out of her. In the meantime, get on side with your partner.

Hold on Nick at the door a moment; he nods reluctantly, then exits with headset. Reese just shakes his head in disbelief, and we go to: *

33 EXT. - VIRTUAL DIMENSIONS, INC. - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING) 33

Corporate headquarters as we saw before. Nick's Caddie parked out front now next to Tracy's N.D. ride.

DISSOLVE INTO:

34 INT. - COMPUTER LAB - NIGHT 34

CLOSE ON a computer monitor. Machine code flashing by. We hear O.C. keyclicks, maybe the white noise and screech of a modem hooking up...

Adjust to TRACY and FULFORD. NICK is just entering. They're engrossed in the code as it scrolls by onscreen. Tracy's reading through impounded files...

FULFORD
Rita Scott's alibi checks out. She was on the Internet when Lo was murdered. Logged on from her home office.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 34

NICK
We're talking about a computer wizard here. Could she have faked it?

FULFORD
It'd be some trick but, with the right stuff, maybe. The heart of their program is the most sophisticated Interactive Engine I've ever seen.
(beat; shrugs)
Anything's possible.

TRACY
(reading)
Looks like the partners had a contract: Lo's shares revert to the corporation in the event of his death. Meaning the sole remaining partner, Rita, controls them now. *

FULFORD
(beat; looking up)
Sounds like motive to me.

TRACY
Yeah, but... it's so in your face. She must have known we'd turn that up right away.

NICK
She didn't care... she thinks she committed the perfect crime.

TRACY
...Uh... are you saying you know she's guilty?

NICK *
She confessed to me. *
(off Tracy's look) *
In the game. *

FULFORD *
She'd have to be on-line somewhere * to do that. But there's no way to * trace it... much less prove it. *

TRACY *
Nick. Come on... *

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 2 34

NICK
I know. I know. We don't have any evidence - Reese gave me the same speech. But look at it this way. Right now we have nothing. If there is a clue, or clues hidden in the game, it can't hurt to keep playing it.

TRACY
(not pleased)
That's not exactly our regular routine.

NICK
(thinks)
From what I've seen of the game so far, everything takes place in real Toronto locations. The first one was a boudoir at Casa Loma. The last one I saw looked like BCE Place. The clues could be there.

TRACY
How do you know where to look? How do you know what you're looking for?

NICK
I don't.

TRACY
Well, then it's crazy to waste your time on it.

FULFORD
(shaking her head, staring at her monitor)
Guys... this is weird...
(of their looks)
I've been analyzing the game program that's running on Virtual Dimensions mainframe. It must be the game you're playing, Nick.
(studies looking up)
It's hard to describe...it's almost like the program's eating itself as it goes. Destroying itself.

ON Nick. Realizing...

NICK
She told me there was a time limit. *

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: 3 34

FULFORD
Well, it's not just counting. If you're right... Looks like you've only got one shot at finding whatever there is to find. And less than 30 hours to do it.

Just then Tracy's cell phone rings. She answers. Nick uses the distraction to try to get out of there so he can get back to the game asap.

TRACY
Vetter... yes captain, we're on our way.

She grabs Nick's arm, motions for him to wait. He looks impatient.

TRACY
He'll be there too.

She hangs up and Nick looks pissed.

TRACY (cont'd)
Rita Scott is at the precinct.

NICK
I've got to get back in the game.

TRACY (cont'd)
Nick... the Captain kind of insists... *

Off Nick's look...

34A INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT 34A

Rita sits across from Reese and Tracy and Nick, who paces impatiently in a most un-Nick (Knight) like way. Rita shakes her head, can't believe what she's hearing. She's upset, angry:

RITA
Let me see if I've got this straight.
(right at Nick)
I'm here... as a <u>suspect</u> in Lo's murder... because you say I confessed to you while you were playing the Virtual Vampire game.

NICK
Why did you access the game I was playing?

(CONTINUED)

34A CONTINUED: 34A

RITA
Whoa, whoa - hold on and back up. I didn't access anything.

NICK
Is it the game? You just couldn't kill Lo, that would have been too easy. You needed to let someone know what you'd done. To see how clever you are.

RITA
You know, the more you talk the less sense you make.

REESE
Nick...

But Nick's a little over the edge, here... he leans in close to Rita.

NICK
(to Rita, right in her eye)
I know you're playing this game with me. I know you killed R.H. Lo. And I will prove it.

RITA
I don't have to listen to this. I was not in the game with you, and I never confessed to anything.
(to Reese)
Can I go now? Or shall I call my lawyer. * *

REESE
You can go.

Nick reacts... straightens. Reese and Tracy exchange a look re: Nick's behaviour.

Rita rises, shoots Nick a look... shakes her head and moves toward the door where a uniform escorts her out.

REESE
(to Nick)
You're close to getting yourself an unscheduled vacation here, Nick.

NICK
(terse)
Yeah, well maybe I need one.

(CONTINUED)

34A CONTINUED: 2 34A

And with that he moves to the exit. *

REESE *
Where you going? *

NICK *
(calming himself) *
I need some air. *

He exits, leaving a confused Tracy and smoldering Reese behind.

35 EXT. CASA LOMA - NIGHT - EST. REALITY 35

36 INT. BOUDOIR - NIGHT REALITY 36

Nick being let in the boudoir by a caretaker. He looks around, sees where the entrance to the next level was. He moves to the door, opens it. It's a closet. He opens it and to our surprise there is skull inside. Nick looks at it in curiousity, bags and pockets it. He whooshes off to: *

37 INT. BCE PLACE - NIGHT REALITY 37*

Nick there, scanning the place. There are as many people walking through as budget allows. He puts on the virtual glasses and we are in...

38 VIRTUAL REALITY 38

The place is now empty, except for Rita, dressed as eccentrically as ever. *

RITA *
Where have you been? I was beginning to worry.

NICK
Just doing a little scavenging.

RITA *
You found it? The skull? *

NICK
Yes.

RITA *
Mmm, not bad at all... but of course you have a long way to go yet and the challenges... well... they get... harder.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: 38

RITA
Like Megan over there... she's all yours... if you can get her.

Rita vanishes and MEGAN appears in the distance. She's also young, but unlike Nick's first victim, she's not the submissive type.

Seeing Nick, she stops, frightened. She turns and runs.

Nick's eyes begin to glow... and he WHOOSHES o.s. and:

39 ANOTHER PART OF THE LOCATION 39

WITH MEGAN... stopping in her tracks at the sight of:

NICK... now standing in front of her. He looks her over, HEARS her throbbing heart....

NICK
You have nothing to fear.

MEGAN
Please don't kill me. I haven't done anything. Please.

Nick takes his time... begins a slow approach, Megan backs away... utterly terrified... bumps into something, falls over, cries out...

40 CLOSE ON 40

Megan... a virtual cross materializes in her hand.

Nick can't see the cross from his angle, thinks she's down and disabled. He WHOOSHES to o.s. and:

Megan rises, whirls with the cross as Nick grabs her. She is also wearing a garlic necklace. Nick sees the cross at the last minute, grabs her arm, forcing her to drop it. Now she's really scared... it only gets Nick's blood going, so to speak.

MEGAN
Please don't. Don't kill me, please. I don't want to die. Please, have mercy.

She breaks down, sobbing... and Nick hesitates a moment, seeing this... but a) the game has to be played and b) his vamp urges are getting the better of him.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

She tries to move away again, the necklace catches on the fence and breaks. This time he grabs her roughly. She swoons... Nick hesitates a moment longer... *

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: 40

then sinks his fangs into her. Feeds on virtual blood with a ferocious intensity. Then he lets her drop. He stands there... virtual blood dripping from his mouth. He fingers it into his mouth, savouring the taste.

41 INT. BCE PLACE - NIGHT REALITY 41*

Nick, realizing where he is, rips the headset off, realzies his eyes are vamped, lowers his head quickly so as not to be seen. But amidst his alarm... there is also * satisfaction... Uh oh. And we: *

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

42 OMITTED 42*

43 INT. BCE PLACE - REALITY 43*

Picking up from where we left off. Nick, the vamp under control now, he FLASHES BACK briefly to: *

44 INT. BCE PLACE - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 44*

Megan, dead, beside some decorative foliage adjacent to the facade. *

45 OMITTED 45*

46 RESUME NICK REALITY 46*

He looks to the facade in the near b.g., hurries to it, and the decorative foliage. Trying not to look too odd, he roots through the foliage... stops when he sees: *

A Red Cross blood label, that says "TYPE O-POSITIVE". *

He takes the label and exits.

47 INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT REALITY 47

CLOSE ON: the skull and blood label... *

TRACY (o.s.) *
Is this your idea of a joke? *

PULL BACK, REVEAL we're at Tracy's on her desk. Tracy and Fulford look to Nick... He's a bit hyped right now. *

NICK *
Rita said I'd find what I was looking for if I kept playing the game. *

TRACY *
Uh... this is Rita... in the game. *

NICK *
Right. *

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 47

TRACY
Nick, Reese is going to blow an important blood vessel if you keep pushing this. And frankly, I'm not exactly on board with you, here, either.

NICK
(a gesture to the items)
They have to mean something. I found them in real locations that that I also saw in the game. The skull in a closet in Casa Loma, the blood label at BCE Place. Someone, probably Rita Scott, put them there.

Tracy and Fulford exchange looks. In the b.g. Nat enters to deliver some reports. She stops, listens in.

TRACY
Nick... Someone's pulling your chain. You need a reality check, maybe, I don't know, but this is not you.

Nick has barely heard her.

NICK
I have to find more clues.

FULFORD
In the game...

NICK
(frustration)
The game only points to them. The clues are in real places.

FULFORD
And when you get the clues how do we figure out what they mean?

NICK
I don't know.

Tracy and Fulford exchange a look; Nick's kinda losing it...

ON NAT... concerned about the same thing.

NICK has moved to near Fulford...

FULFORD
Maybe we should look at a different approach...

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 2 47

Nick's heard enough... He fixes Fulford with a whammy... not something we've ever seen Nick do to a fellow cop. NAT sees this, reacts...

NICK
We don't need a different approach. I'm on the right track, don't you agree?

FULFORD
(whammied)
Yes.

Tracy watches in mild disbelief. She's seen a whammy before but the last thing that enters her mind is that this could be one. But it is odd how Fulford changed her mind so quickly...

Nick breaks off the whammy... now aware that Tracy is staring at him.

NICK
(beat)
See? She's with me.

He turns away... Fulford shakes the cobwebs out.

TRACY
You okay Nick? You seem a little... hyped.

NICK
No, it's the game...

TRACY
(not convinced)
Sure...

NICK
Look, I better get going.

He moves off. Tracy gives Fulford a worried look.

NATALIE stops Nick as he passes, keeps her voice down.

NATALIE
Can we have a little private chat?

Nick looks to her, he's anxious to get going.

NICK
Can't it wait.

NATALIE
Absolutely not.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 3 47

He gives her a look, she leads him into observation, shuts the door behind her.

47A INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT 47A

As Nick moves into the room, Nat stays by the door for now.

NICK
I really don't have time for this--

NATALIE
What the hell's wrong with you? Tracy was right <u>there</u> - you hypnotized a <u>cop</u> right in front of her.

NICK
I know. I shouldn't have.

NATALIE
"Shouldn't" have?

NICK
(impatient)
There's a murder to solve and no one seems to want to do it but me.

NATALIE
You mean no one wants to do it your way... through that game.

NICK
It's the only way.

NATALIE
Really... What is it about that game, Nick? ...That Virtual Vampire game.
(beat; it dawns on her)
Let me guess. It's giving you the "kick" you're missing.

NICK
(temper flaring)
No.

NATALIE
Let me guess, you have to kill in this game, <u>don't</u> you. *
(off his silence)
Nick. You're not looking at the bigger picture here. We've had a few set backs lately.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47A CONTINUED: 47A

NATALIE (cont'd)
Remember your guilt trip into Wonderland? And recently... the possession, the memory loss... it's all adding up. Now you're hynotizing cops in the precinct, I mean... I'm worried Nick. I really am.

(CONTINUED)

47A CONTINUED: 47A

NICK
I got over those things and I'll get over this one.

NATALIE
I'm not sure you're over <u>any</u> of it.

NICK
I've got to go back into that <u>game</u>.

Beat. She looks at him... sees she's not really getting through.

NATALIE
You want to risk every gain we've made... No problem. Duty calls.

He looks to her... conflicted. She turns and exits briskly. leaving Nick to ponder the situation. Off his expression, go to:

48 INT. LOFT - NIGHT <u>REALITY</u> 48

Nick enters, heads straight for the fridge, grabs some blood, downs it hungrily... but it's only cow's blood... he grimaces slightly; its taste not nearly as satisfying as it normally is for him.

LACROIX (o.s.)
Would you prefer a little fine... human vintage?

Nick is surprised to see Lacroix. But his eyes immediately go to the bottle. Lacroix sees this, grins:

LACROIX (cont'd)
It's young, but has a robust, earthy flavor... and it finishes well. Quite delightful.

Lacroix has moved to Nick... all but waves the bottle under his nose... Nick grabs the bottle, takes a long, pleasurable drink. Lacroix wanders away during:

LACROIX (cont'd)
(that chuckle of his)
I've been having the strangest inklings about you lately. That you've been wandering ever so slowly back into the fold.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

LACROIX (cont'd) (cont'd)
So you can imagine my delight at seeing you like this. I almost hate to ask what's happened to you.

NICK
Nothing's happened to me.

Lacroix has wound up across the loft, near a pillar. He turns, looks to Nick... Off Lacroix's "Oh, really"? look:

NICK (cont'd)
(no use hiding it)
It's a game... a virtual reality game.

Lacroix shoots Nick a disapproving look, but says nothing. He spies the pair of the glasses on Nick's table. *

NICK (cont'd)
About vampires.

LACROIX
How quaint.
(a raised eyebrow)
And this is what has kindled the stirrings in you? A game?

NICK
I'm doing it to solve a crime.

LACROIX
Yes, of course you are. And... you have killed in this game?

Nick has moved to the window, his back to the room.

NICK
Yes.

LACROIX
Savoured your victims' blood?
(off Nick's silence)
...~~It must be some~~ game...
(very impressive)
Lacroix grins at this... then LAUNCHES.

ON NICK'S reaction... then a beat for Lacroix's words to really sink in, then he comes out of it, moves with purpose to the table. He needs to get back in the game. He grabs the set of game glasses, puts them on, activates them and * WHOMP! We're in:

49 INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNELS (BCE HEATING RM) - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 49

Nick fully expecting to stalk another pitiful sex kitten, but something about this frightening environment tells him he's not in for a day at the beach. He passes by a sign that reads "BAY-RICHMOND HEATING AND SERVICE TUNNELS" takes note of his location.

He moves along the corridors, warily. VAMPHEARS

QUICK FOOTSTEPS... they FADE. He freezes. Senses that he is being stalked.

Nick barely has time to react when a stake goes whizzing past his head. *

He whooshes off, stops 100 feet away.

NICK'S VIRTUAL VAMPVISION POV

Different from our usual vampvision. Nick scanning this underground maze, catching only glimpses of someone running through the tunnels. There are people hunting him and they are damn good...

WITH NICK as he turns... and out of the maze/darkness there is a flash of light off a sword as its blade is swung TOWARDS CAMERA.

Nick reacts, WHOOSHES OUT OF SHOT.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As Nick whooshes into shot, turns and looks back to where the hunter appeared, but there's no one there. On Nick's puzzled expression, we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

50 INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNELS (NOTE: BCE HEATING RM) - NIGHT 50
VIRTUAL REALITY

WE WHOOSH into the scene as Nick tucks himself in behind some cover; perhaps a collage of weird-looking pipes, one of which is releasing virtual steam that Nick has to be careful not to let touch him. He VAMPLISTENS for the enemy. We HEAR... various creepy sounds; water dripping, pipes expanding, etc... and a distant set of footsteps.

Nick is vamped, charged, having the time of his life.

He takes a cautious few steps from hiding, glances around, looking for a way out... he stops at a SOUND.

50A INT. SECOND LEVEL, BCE HEATING RM - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 50A

Something flashes by us; a vampire hunter (or: dHampir) in state of the art search and destroy garb (NOTE: As per Art Department/Wardrobe Department). And RESUME:

50B WITH NICK 50B

Nick whirls, tries to place the sound...

Then there is a SECOND SOUND from the opposite direction. Go to:

50C INT. SECOND LEVEL - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 50C

The second dHampir, similarly attired as the first, but in a different colour... moves cautiously along as he scans to the level below. And RESUME: *

50D WITH NICK 50D

Moving carefully along, scanning for whoever is after him. Where the hell are they - they seem to be everywhere. Of course this is virtual reality so they can be everywhere. Nick turns a corner and STOPS, seeing:

50E NICK'S VIRTUAL POV 50E

A huge cross, heavily backlit, (NOTE: Either suspended in mid-air or simply standing on the floor)...

BACK TO SCENE

(CONTINUED)

50E CONTINUED: 50E

Nick slams back around the corner to escape the cross' effect. No doubt, he can't go that way. CAMERA ADJUSTS TO:

Vamp Hunter #1... suddenly just there, and throwing an ornate glass container of holy-water at Nick.

NICK ducks, rushes o.s. to:

50F ANOTHER ANGLE 50F

Nick again stops in his tracks, as he sees:

VAMP HUNTER #2... blocking his way. *

They have him trapped. Hunter #1 has magically acquired a sword. The Hunters begin to close in on Nick.

INTERCUTTING WITH:

VAMP HUNTER POV'S... As:

Nick VAMPS... the urge to survive, and to kill, surge up within him:

*

ON NICK, he WHOOSHES o.s. to:

NICK AND HUNTER #2... As Nick is instantly on him, and has his fangs into him an instant after that. He tosses his lifeless body o.s. to the ground, looks to where Hunter #1 was... but he's gone... and:

Behind Nick, Hunter #1 wields his sword as he steps forward, swings the sword in an attempt to decapitate Nick. But Nick sees it coming in time, ducks and falls back against the wall, the sword slashes into a wall, and WHOOSH:

ANOTHER ANGLE

He's on Hunter #1... and makes quick work of him. (NOTE: Perhaps a virtual snapping of the neck just for variety?) ...It's a rush for Nick... He steps back, savouring the adventure, the killing, looks down to the two bodies, and:

WHOMP! he's out of the virtual subterranean hell... AND BACK IN:

51 INT. LOFT - NIGHT (REALITY 51*

Nick removing the glasses. We see his intense expression... savouring the taste of blood in his mouth, reaches for the bottle Lacroix gave him, drinks it with gusto. As he lowers the bottle, his expression changes... he's caught himself thoroughly indulging in the sensations... It's not right, yet he can't control it. Beat. Then he WHOOSHES o.s. and we go to:

52 INT. SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL (BCE HEATING RM - NIGHT REALITY 52*

A fire door opens and Nick steps out into the tunnel... and it looks very much like the virtual one at that, except that the silence and creepy sounds are gone, replaced by the NOISE of the boilers, etc. You can hardly hear yourself think in here. He hurries past a few familiar areas... sees the "BAY RICHMOND HEATING AND SERVICE TUNNEL" sign that he saw in virtual reality.

But he freezes when he VAMPHEARS two pairs of footsteps approaching him. He vamps out instinctively, seemingly unable to distinguish reality from virtual reality.

He slips into a darkened area, ready to pounce. Looks to:

53 NICK'S REAL POV 53*

Two people are approaching... see them only past various obstructions, and from what we see of them, it looks for all the world like they could be the two Vamp Hunters. Their gear is very similar.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick slips out of the light... He's ready...

INTERCUTTING WITH:

The obscured images of the approaching people.

RESUME NICK

He's set to ATTACK... and CAMERA REVEALS:

A PAIR OF MAINTAINANCE WORKERS, round a corner... and walk right toward where Nick is hiding...

ON NICK

Vamped to the max in the shadows, barely containing his urge to attack.

ON THE WORKERS

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

As they move closer and closer and finally right on Nick.

NICK

All set to pounce when he realizes what is what. He takes a moment to come to his senses... shakes off the vamp... a concerned look as the maintainence workers move past and head down the corridor. He moves from hiding, CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM... then he stops, looking o.s. to:

Where last he left Virtual Reality. And there, right where the Hunters fell... are two more clues; an hourglass and a truncheon. He kneels down, studies them, more puzzled than ever, and we return to:

54 INT. PRECINCT BULLPEN - NIGHT REALITY 54

Nick, Tracy and Fulford moving through the bullpen toward Nick's desk. Tracy has the hourglass, skull and blood label. * Fulford studies the truncheon, she looks nonplussed. Nick's * somewhat agitated state is apparent.

NICK
I know you think I'm pushing it.

TRACY
"Pushing it" would be an understatement. The Captain thinks you've lost it.

NICK
You think he's right?

She is about to answer... but:

REESE (o.s.)
More collectibles from the novelty shop, Knight?

Reese is waiting for them as they step up to Nick's desk.

NICK
Captain, I know how this looks. I can drop this game right now if you want... but I do and I swear to you Rita Scott walks.

Reese just looks at him; what do I make of this? What the hell do I do? They square off, so to speak.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: 54

REESE (cont'd)
Look... you want me to put a surveillance team on Rita Scott, no problem. Maybe she'll slip up somehow. That's police work I can understand.

NICK
It doesn't matter where she is right now. She's on-line with the game and the only place she'll slip up is in the game.

REESE
...Uh-huh. And she's in there. Dropping little bread crumbs for you.

NICK
Virtual clues, yeah.

REESE
...Virtual clues.

NICK
Captain, each virtual clue has lead me to a real clue. Every time I move to the next level, I find something that gets me closer to the real piece of evidence that can convict her. But there's a clock on this one that's running out. I have to get onto the next level. *

REESE
...You are on the next level, if you ask me.

It's not a compliment. Nick glares at him.

NICK
Fine.

And with that he just turns and leaves. Leaving a surprised Reese, Tracy and Fulford behind.

54A INT. LOFT - NIGHT 54A

Nick enters... a man on a mission. He goes for the fridge, downs some of Lacroix's blood and puts on the VR glasses and we're in...

55 INT. POWER STATION - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 55*

With height and a Gothic touch if possible. Nick finds himself in the middle of the place... he glances around... it seems deserted. He sees a large "virtual sign" on a wall; "HEARN GENERATING STATION". *

He starts to explore a little, turns a corner and has no time to react to the blur that is on his throat. *

Nick fights off the attacker, which we reval to be a very nasty MALE VIRTUAL VAMPIRE. *

The fight is on.

NOTE: Description for the purposes of this draft, only. The fight encompasses as much of the height, breadth and width of the Hearn as possible; it's mostly hand to hand, with solid hits that separate them, and allow one or the other to fly (whoosh) to a higher spot or a lower one, depending on the final details of this sequence.

For now, suffice to say it's a BIG VAMP BATTLE, the penultimate moment coming when Nick manages to free himself from the Virtual Vamp's lethal grasp... Nick grabs a razor thin stainless steel object from a stack... something like an oversized washer, presumably useful in some power generating sort of way. He whirls, hurling the object o.s. in the VV's direction... * * * *

ON VV... for his surprised reaction, and:

ANOTHER ANGLE

The object separates the VV's "virtual" head from his "virtual" body... (NOTE: In as tasteful a way as can be devised... i.e., we won't see the actual separation).

And the VV is gone. OFF NICK, completely jazzed by the kill...

55A INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT 55A*

Tracy at her computer looking dejected. Fulford sits across from her, deep in thought. Reese steps up. * *

REESE *
How's it going? *

TRACY *
There's nothing in Rita Scott's *
background, nothing from what the *
canvas teams found on her or R.H. Lo. *
Nothing at all that points to her as *
his killer, or to anyone for that *
matter. *

(CONTINUED)

55A CONTINUED: 55A

FULFORD
You know, there may be something to what Nick has been saying.

All eyes on her now. It makes it a little uncomfortable.

FULFORD (cont'd)
Uh... well. Ask yourself. Why games?

REESE
I beg your pardon...

FULFORD
These computer games, the internet, the whole thing. People are into it because it gives them something to think about. It gives the mind something challenging to do. And it's fun. It's a great ego boost, too, when you win. The harder the game, the greater the boost. That's why we play. We get hooked.

REESE
And?

FULFORD
What if Rita Scott is hooked on her own game? She's sure she's going to win. That nothing anyone does is going to get her convicted. The clues she's leaving in the real world... she gets a charge out of that. And she won't stop until the game she's playing with Nick is played out.
(off Reese's look)
...Um. Hypothetically speaking.

Tracy looks from Fulford, to Reese. Not so uncertain any more.

TRACY
She is the only suspect with motive so far. Hell, she's the only suspect.
(beat)
Maybe it's just remotely possible that Nick is right.

REESE
(doubtful)
So what the hell do the clues mean?

(CONTINUED)

55A CONTINUED: 2 55A

FULFORD
They're probably a game in themselves...

TRACY
(thinking, then)
...An anagram, maybe?

Off their thoughful looks.

56 INT. POWER STATION - NIGHT REALITY 56

REAL Nick standing at the spot where Male VV vanished. He looks around... sees two more items for the collection (NOTE: Separated at precisely the distance and on the same spots as where the VV'S head and body wound up): A Jack Knife and a Noose.

He scoops up the knife, all but crushes it in his hand as another wave of uncontrolable vamp feelings washes over him. He fights them off, puts on his game set again, and WHOMP, we're in:

57 INT. POWER STATION - NIGHT VIRTUAL REALITY 57*

Rita is there. She smiles at Nick.

RITA
There's just one level left. The problem is, you can't get there until you've figured out the clues: the game within the game.

NICK *
(thinks) *
An anagram... *

RITA
(a grin, then:)
Time, as they say, "is becoming a factor". Bye for now.

Nick watches as she disappears, and go to:

57A INT. POWER STATION - REALITY 57A*

Nick takes his mobile phone, dials. *

NICK *
Tracy, I found two more clues - a jack * knife and a noose. *

(CONTINUED)

57A CONTINUED: 57A

INTERCUT: PRECINCT - TRACY AT FULFORD'S COMPUTER (SC. 58) *

TRACY *
Nick, listen... I think it's an... *

NICK *
(cutting her off) *
Look, it's a game within a game... *
it's an... *

NICK & TRACY *
Anagram. *

58 INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT 58

Tracy hangs up. She, Fulford and Reese sit around Fulford's computer. Fulford works away on the keyboard looking at the screen which has the names of all the clues Nick has collected listed. *

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 58

They are (not in this order) SKULL, TRUNCHEON, O TYPE BLOOD LABEL, HOURGLASS (the first letters of which will eventually spell out "St. Johns"). *

TRACY *
The last two - jack knife and noose. *

Fulford types in the last two clues. *

FULFORD
This is a decoding program we designed for the RCMP. It can give thousands of solutions to a word jumble in minutes.

TRACY
Yeah but we only want one answer.

FULFORD
Then we should tell it whether we want first letters, last letters, middle letters or progressing letters.

REESE
I say progressing, first is too easy.

INTERCUTTING WITH:

58A INT. POWER STATION - NIGHT 58A

Nick with the final two clues doing the same thing that the others are doing only he's just using pen and paper. He's writing down all the names, underlining the first letter of each.

RESUME PRECINCT:

Meanwhile at the precinct...

FULFORD
S-R-C-P-G-E.

TRACY
(trying to "sound" something out)
...Ssscrep... prescp...

REESE
(frustrated)
Do we get to pick another vowel?

RESUME WITH NICK:

Back to Nick, figuring it out faster with a pen and paper than they are with the computer. He arrives at:

(CONTINUED)

58A CONTINUED: 58A

"ST JOHNS"

He shakes his head... it had to be...

(CONTINUED)

58A CONTINUED: 58A

NICK *
A Church... *

He checks his watch... sees that sun rise is imminent. He * WHOOSHES off and we go to: *

58B EXT. SUNRISE (STOCK SHOT) 58B*

Nick's got his work cut out for him. *

59 THRU 60 OMITTED 59* THRU* 60*

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

61 INT. PRECINCT - DAY 61*

Tracy, Reese and Fulford still pouring over the anagram puzzle. *

REESE *
I dunno, maybe we should try last letters. *

Fulford nods, they try that. *

62 EXT. CHURCH - DAY 62

The Caddy pulls up in front of a church.

63 INT. CADDY - DAY 63

Nick, covered up as best he can (coat up around his head, gloves, sunglasses)... looks to the Church... it's going to be a painful distance to cross, if not a fatal one. He steels himself against the inevitable, then gets out.

64 EXT. CADDY - CONTINOUS 64

Nick does a quick check that no one is watching him, then rushes o.s. toward the Church.

65 ANOTHER ANGLE (HANDHELD?) 65

Nick's perilous crossing... Moving as fast as the pain of his sizzling body will allow, he stumbles once... suffers there on his knees for what seems like forever to him, then finds the will to right himself and make an all-or-nothing dash for the Church door. Thank heavens, the door is not locked. He throws it open and propels himself inside.

66 INT. CHURCH - DAY 66

As Nick tumbles in. Rolls out of the light streaming in after him.

He throws off his sizzling coat, quickly removes his glasses and his smouldering gloves... catches his breath, looks around at the deserted Church, and rises.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: 66

This is not a good place to be for a vampire. Holy ground, images of Saints, a large crucifix beyond the sanctified altar. He looks up toward the doors, sees the real "St. John's United" carving there.

Nick turns away from it all for a moment... then reaches into his jacket, produces his headset, puts it on, activates it, and WHOMP!... We're in:

67 INT. CHURCH - DAY - NICK'S POV VIRTUAL REALITY 67

As he turns and scans the virtual hallowed house. Then CAMERA DOLLIES forward, moving down the aisle between the pews, toward the altar... scanning... and we jump back as "Virtual Flame" shoot up from the ground ahead of us. *

Then the flame is just gone. Beat... then we RESUME * DOLLYING FORWARD: CAMERA FINDS the Baptismal Font... Then * HEAR:

RITA (o.s.)
I really have to say I'm impressed, Detective.

CAMERA PANS QUICKLY to FIND... Rita. Ever-alluring, ever-dangerous Rita, but not Virtual Vampire Rita. This * incarnation has her dressed as her version of vampire hunter. She's off to one side, near the altar, and she's armed with a truly splendid stake-loaded crossbow. *

RITA (cont'd) *
Good work. But where is the murder weapon?
(off Nick's reaction) *
Yes. It's here. My guess would be * it's somewhere a vampire wouldn't * want to touch it. Lot's of * possibilities for that in a church *

Nick looks around... where to look...

67A INT. PRECINCT - DAY 67A*

More combinations of the last letters of the words coming up. * Tracy reads from the screen. *

TRACY *
L-N-E-D-S-E... nedsel... densel, * lesned... *

REESE *
(shaking his head) *
These are words? *

(CONTINUED)

67A CONTINUED: 67A

FULFORD
They could be place names.

REESE
Of course, I was in Lesned just the other day. What's left?

TRACY
First letters.

REESE
Figures.

Fulford tries first letters.

FULFORD
T-H-O-N-S-J... John St.

REESE
Or St. John...

TRACY
(it hits her)
Of course, the Church of St. John... a church is the perfect place for a vampire game.

REESE
Let's go.
(to a pair of cops)
Fenster, Steeves, you're with us.

As they head out we CUT BACK TO:

67B INT. CHURCH - DAY 67B*

Resume, Nick heads toward the baptismal font.

RITA (cont'd)
Good guess. But you'll never get to it.

68 RITA'S <u>VIRTUAL POV</u> 68*

Of Nick...

NICK
I'm not a Detective, here. In here, I'm a vampire. You may call me de Brabant.

Indeed, his manner and tone are quite threatening. The old Nick resurfacing? Or a ploy of some kind?

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: 68

BACK TO SCENE

Rita smiles. *

RITA
That's the whole point of games like this... "de Brabant". People can be anything they want to be. Except who they are.

69 INT. CHURCH - DAY REALITY 69*

In one of the chairs behind the altar... REVEAL REAL Rita... headset on, playing the game... and also watching the real Nick. One of her glass lenses is flipped up, allowing her to monitor both "worlds". * * *

70 RITA'S REAL POV 70*

Real Nick stopped near the first few rows of pews. *

BACK TO SCENE *

Real Rita grins to herself, rises silently, and we're back in: *

71 INT. CHURCH - DAY VIRTUAL REALITY 71*

RESUME Nick and Rita: *

RITA (cont'd) *
It's a little dark corner of the human psyche that can be exploited without limitation. * * *
(beat) *
Everyone wants to be something they're not. * *

Nick reacts... he heard that. She's moved closer to him, taking a semi-circular, cautious path. * *

72 INT. CHURCH - DAY REALITY 72*

CLOSE ON a 9mm Glock... in real Rita's hand, as she comes around to behind real Nick... who is unaware of her presence, immersed as he is in the game. * * *

73 INT. CHURCH - DAY VIRTUAL REALITY 73*

NICK
(to V-Rita)
And what do you want to be?

RITA
Exactly what I am. The winner.

And she fires the stake.

ON VIRTUAL NICK as the stake impacts high and right into his chest. He staggers back, falls... and:

74 INT. CHURCH - DAY REALITY 74*

CLOSE ON Rita's smoking gun. It has fired. And:

REAL NICK... has been hit. The bullet has slammed him back towards the altar...

RITA removes her game glasses. FIRES AGAIN.

The impact jars Nick's body, the game set flies off his head.

Nick's hurting, trembling... weakened by his surroundings, he's susceptible to the agony of the shots.

RITA
Too bad, Detective, you played a very good game. But you lose, anyway. The perfect crime can't go on forever. ...One last thing... The murder weapon isn't in the Baptismal Font. ...It's right here.

And she FIRES... four or five times... each bullet finds its mark, Nick slams back against the altar as the bullets hit him... and in his weakened state, they keep him down.

Rita stops firing. Pause... as the echo of shots subsides. Nick, from all appearances, lies dead.

Rita calmly turns to leave, but:

75 ON NICK REALITY 75

Vampeyes slam open... a dark expression, vengeful. He sits up, then WHOOSHES OUT OF SHOT, and:

WITH Rita as Nick is suddenly upon her. She cries out as he turns her to him, fully vamped. Her expression mirrors her astonishment - and sudden fear. Nick is in killing mode. The gun drops to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED: 75

NICK
(almost a growl)
If you're going to play a game...You'd better know who you're up against.

And he rears back, fangs beared and descending to:

76 CLOSE ON REALITY 76

Rita's neck... the fangs stopped to within a millimeter of their target, perhaps actually pressing against her skin, and:

BACK TO SCENE REALITY

Nick pulls away... his blood lust all but impossible to control, then he looks away... and when he looks back to her again, he is unvamped... but still fighting his vampire urge. He takes her face in his hand... too hard... she winces... He fixes her with a look, the whammy...

NICK
You never saw me like this...

RITA
...Never saw...

Nick abruptly breaks off the whammy... only slightly calmer now, then turns her around as he reaches for his cuffs, and:

NICK
You're under arrest for murder. You have the right to remain silent, you have the right to an attorney, anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law... *

She shakes off the whammy effects.

As he cuffs her, Tracy, Reese, Fulford et al enter, guns drawn. They see that Nick has the situation under control:

TRACY
Nick, you okay?

NICK
Yeah.
(a look o.s.)
That's the murder weapon.

Tracy moves to Nick. Reese moves to the murder weapon.

REESE
You sure?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: 76

NICK *
Send it to Ballistics, you'll see. *

REESE *
You may not believe this, but I hope *
you're right. *

Nick smiles as Tracy moves to take Rita. *

TRACY *

Guess what Rita, there's no "Get out of Jail Free" cards where you're going.

Rita manages a smile.

RITA
Maybe not... but as long as there's a game to play.

Reese, Tracy and Nick exchange looks and we: *

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FIVE

TAG

FADE IN:

77 INT. LOFT - NIGHT 77

Nick moves from the kitchen toward the couch. He's pouring himself a little something. Recent events still reverberate inside him, he's not quite himself. CAMERA ADJUSTS TO FIND NAT, during: *

NATALIE
Good thing Tracy decided to show up at the Church. I wouldn't have liked your chances getting Rita Scott back to the precinct on your own at 8 in the morning. *

Nat's on the couch, handling Nick's game set, distracted.. There's a fire in the fireplace. *

He sits next to her... No eye contact, here. Yet. He looks down at the game set... wanting it. *

NATALIE
You going to keep this thing?

NICK
I've thought about it. Virtual vampire, virtual feeding...

NATALIE
Virtual killing, you mean.

He doesn't respond, she doesn't know the half of it... He goes to take a sip of his wine, but stops. Somehow... it's innapropriate right now. She notices.

NATALIE (cont'd) *
(beat) *
Nick... I don't think you realize how scared I was... how scared I <u>am</u>... I know you liked being able to kill again. Even if it was a game. They uh... they say games like this can be addictive. *
(off his look) *
We have to get a grip on what's happening to you. Slow it down if we can. ...You do want that...? *

He looks from her to the game set... part of him would very much like to play this game again. A silent beat... then: *

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

NICK *
(re: the game set) *
Take that away from me. *

She holds his look a moment... then rises, moves to the * fireplace, stares in to it, her mind full of troubling * thoughts. *

Nick watches her, then looks away, some sort of inner * struggle at work. *

Then Nat tosses the set into the fire, and watches: *

As it burns, and we:

FADE OUT.

THE END

ORIGINAL